

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, SOCI
SUBJECT: WORLD CONFERENCE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION--PARTICIPANT REACTIONS

1. THE UK MISSION HERE HAS GIVEN US A DETAILED BRIEFING
ON THEIR ASSESSMENT OF THE RECENTLY COMPLETED WORLD
CONFERENCE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION.
WE HAVE ALSO DISCUSSED THE CONFERENCE WITH A REPRESENTA-
TIVE OF THE INDIAN MISSION AND FIND THAT THE CONCLUSIONS
ARE QUITE SIMILAR. THERE IS A MOOD OF PUZZLEMENT RE-
GARDING THE ATTITUDE OF THE MODERATE AFRICANS WHOSE ROLE
VARIED FROM PASSIVITY TO ONE OF ENCOURAGING THE ARABS.
THERE WAS AGREEMENT THAT THE RADICAL NON-ALIGNED DID
THEIR UTMOST TO EXPLOIT THE DECISIONS OF THE BELGRADE CON-
FERENCE.

2. THE PRELIMINARY UK ASSESSMENT WAS THAT A SMALL GROUP
OF ARABS LED BY SYRIA, LIBYA, JORDAN AND EGYPT ACHIEVED
THEIR OBJECTIVES DESPITE THE DISCOMFORT OF THE AFRICANS
AND THE OPEN CRITICISM OF THE LATIN AMERICAN GROUP. THE
UK WAS PUZZLED ABOUT THE ATTITUDE OF THE MODERATE
AFRICANS WHO SEEMED TO ALLOW THE RADICALS TO TAKE OVER.
THE UK REPORTED THAT THE INFLUENTIAL NEW YORKERS, SALIM
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(TANZANIA) AND HARRIMAN (NIGERIA) TOOK LITTLE PART IN THE
PROCEEDINGS. WITH RESPECT TO WHETHER THE WESTERN
EUROPEAN ATTITUDE WOULD CAUSE ANY LONG-TERM STRAIN IN
THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE AFRICANS, THE UK FELT THAT THE
WALKOUT OVER THE OBJECTIONABLE LANGUAGE PERTAINING TO
ISRAEL RELIEVED THEM FROM FACING OTHER DIFFICULTIES IN THE
CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS. THE UK BELIEVED THE LANGUAGE ON

SOUTH AFRICA WOULD PROBABLY HAVE LED TO A SPLIT IN THE EC-9 POSITION AND CAUSED EVEN MORE ADVERSE AFRICAN REACTION DUE TO LACK OF CHANGE IN THE WESTERN POSITION. THE UK THUS CONCLUDED THAT THEY GOT OFF LIGHTLY.

3. THE UK DELEGATION WAS PARTICULARLY STRUCK BY THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE RADICALS EXPLOITED THE DECISIONS BY THE NON-ALIGNED AT BELGRADE AND NOTED THAT THIS RADICAL INFLUENCE WILL POSE A PROBLEM FOR FUTURE CONFERENCES AS WELL.

4. THE UK FELT THAT THE AFRICANS MAY BE SOMEWHAT CONFUSED BY THE WESTERN EUROPEAN WALKOUT BECAUSE THE WESTERN GROUP HAD EMPHASIZED THAT THEY COULD NOT ACCEPT ANY REAFFIRMATION OF THE ZIONISM/RACISM LANGUAGE AND HAD CONCENTRATED ON THIS POINT. THE AFRICANS THUS FELT THAT THE WESTERN BOTTOM LINE POSITION HAD BEEN MET AND WERE SURPRISED TO FIND THE EUROPEAN WALKOUT CAUSED BY LANGUAGE WHICH DID NOT INCLUDE THE SPECIFIC ZIONISM/RACISM LANGUAGE. SOME BELIEVE THE EUROPEANS INTENDED TO LEAVE THE CONFERENCE ANYWAY AND WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SATISFIED WITH REVISED LANGUAGE.

5. THE UK DELEGATION REPORTED THAT THE FUTURE STANCE OF THE EC-9 WITH RESPECT TO THE DECADE WILL PROBABLY BE ONE OF VOTING AGAINST ALL CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS BUT WILL NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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GO SO FAR AS "US NON-PARTICIPATION" IN THE DECADE. THIS SUBJECT, HOWEVER, WILL BE DISCUSSED AT FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE NINE.

6. IN A SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION AN INDIAN MISSION OFFICER (WHO WAS NOT PRESENT AT THE CONFERENCE) REPORTED THAT THEY WERE SURPRISED AT THE ROLE OF THE MODERATE AFRICANS AND THAT THE AFRICANS WERE EITHER NOT IN OPPOSITION OR SEEMED TO BE ENCOURAGING THE ARABS TOWARDS A MORE RADICAL STANCE. THE INDIAN DELEGATE ALSO UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESULTS OF THE BELGRADE NON ALIGNED CONFERENCE.

7. COMMENT. IT APPEARS THAT EACH GROUP IS BLAMING THE OTHERS FOR FAILURE TO EXERT INFLUENCE OR COMMUNICATE THEIR VIEWS ACCURATELY. THE RADICALS SEEM TO HAVE EXPECTED THE MODERATE AFRICANS TO BRING PRESSURE ON THEM. THE LATINS ARE ACCUSED OF BEING CRITICAL BUT INEFFECTIVE, WHILE THE WESTERN EUROPEANS ARE PERCEIVED AS HAVING HAD A PRE-DETERMINED COURSE OF ACTION. YOUNG

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